

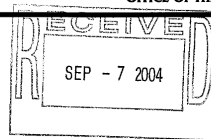
Comment Letter AL078

AL078

CITY OF DANA POINT



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



August 31, 2004

California High Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Dan Leavitt

Office of Railroad Development
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue, N. W. MS 20
Washington DC. 20592
Attn: David Valenstein

LOSSAN
Caltrans Division of Rail
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Patrick Merrill

OCTA
P. O. Box 14184
550 South Main St.
Orange, CA 92863
Attn: Shohreh Dupuis

Subject: California High Speed Train/Draft Program EIR/EIS and Seismic Impact to the Capistrano Beach Bluffs

Caltrans and the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) have proposed plans that would result in double tracking of railroad lines that pass by and through beaches, coastal resources, and historic structures located in the communities of San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano. In response to these proposals, the South Orange County Rail Working Group (SOCRWG) was formed. The SOCRWG consists of elected officials and staff level representatives from the cities of San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano, as well as representatives from Assemblywoman Pat Bates' office, Senator Morrow's office, and 5TH District Supervisor and Chairman of the Board of Orange County Supervisors Tom Wilson, as well as ex-officio representatives from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

In April 2003 and April 2004, SOCRWG and the City of Dana Point drafted letters to Caltrans and CHSRA that communicated that the SOCRWG unanimously supported the long split tunnel alternative with a station located at Pico. This innovative approach appears to address all of the concerns of the cities represented by the SOCRWG. This approach is so superior to other alternatives that it appears as if it is the only solution that allows railway traffic to remain relatively close to the coast without re-directing railway traffic to an inland corridor.

We have had some recent developments in the stability of the bluffs that run the length of the rail corridor and Coast Highway in Capistrano Beach. I have attached the most recent correspondence date April 2004 for your reference. As you can see, the City has again mentioned our concerns relating to bluff stability as it relates to the rail traffic through Capistrano Beach.

During the last 12 months, we have had a series of bluff failures along the aforementioned section of Coast Highway. While the City does not own the aforementioned bluff property, we remain concerned about public safety in Dana Point.

While our public works crews were out cleaning up the last slide that occurred on Monday, August 30 at 1 AM, we noticed that there was an appreciable difference in the vibrations associated with the Metrolink trains that were running during the clean-up efforts. I have asked our geotechnical consultants to perform seismic studies to determine the impact of rail traffic on the bluffs that are a short distance from the rail lines. We are also concerned about the existing freight traffic and the seismic impact from these trains that travel through this section of Capistrano Beach in Dana Point.

Given the aforementioned, I am sure you will understand the Community's concern over the Short Tunnel alternative. Because the Long Split Tunnel is such a superior alternative, it appears to be the only choice. The Short Tunnel Alternative is double tracking along the Coast and has some serious public safety as well as geological concerns due to its proximity to the fragile Coastal Bluffs in Capistrano Beach. As a result of the additional rail traffic, it will only compound an existing situation that has serious safety concerns.

Thank you for your time and attention to ensure that the transportation needs of California are balanced with the environmental and safety concerns of its residents as well as the safeguard of its precious resources.

Sincerely,


Douglas C. Choksy
City Manager

C: The Honorable Mayor and Dana Point City Council
The Honorable Thomas Wilson, Chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors
Cindy Quon, Caltrans, District Director
Arthur Leahy, Orange County Transportation Authority, Chief Executive Officer

AL078-1
cont.

AL078-1

33282 Golden Lantern, Dana Point, CA 92629 • (949) 248-3500 • FAX (949) 248-9920
Internet: www.danapoint.org

Comment Letter AL078 Continued

CITY OF DANA POINT



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

April 30, 2004

California High Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: California High Speed Train/Draft program EIR/EIS

Caltrans and the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) have proposed plans that would result in double tracking of railroad lines that pass by and through beaches, coastal resources, and historic structures located in the communities of San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano. In response to these proposals, the South Orange County Rail Working Group (SOCRWG) was formed. The SOCRWG consists of elected officials and staff level representatives from the cities of San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano, as well as representatives from Assemblywoman Pat Bates' office, Senator Morrow's office, and 5TH District Supervisor and Chairman of the Board of Orange County Supervisors Tom Wilson, as well as ex-officio representatives from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

In April 2003, SOCRWG drafted a letter to Caltrans and CHSRA that communicated that the SOCRWG unanimously supported the long split tunnel alternative with a station located at Pico. This innovative approach appears to address all of the concerns of the cities represented by the SOCRWG. This approach is so superior to other alternatives that it appears as if it is the only solution that allows railway traffic to remain relatively close to the coast without re-directing railway traffic to an inland corridor. Representatives of the SOCRWG testified to the aforementioned at the CHSRA meeting that was held in San Diego in March of this year.

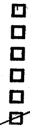
In the letter that was sent in April 2003, the SOCRWG indicated that the Short Tunnel, 1-5 Alternative, was not supported as a viable alternative. The City of Dana Point would like to emphasize that the Short Tunnel is not a viable alternative for the following reasons:

1. In April 2003, the California Coastal Commission, by unanimous vote, approved the Marblehead Development in San Clemente. For the past two decades the City of San Clemente and the developer have worked with the California Coastal Commission to arrive at a proposed development that not only protects the Coast, but also allows for a responsible coastal development project. The Short Tunnel alternative would have a dramatic impact on the proposed project that was approved by the Coastal Commission, and would severely impact a development that has taken decades to get approved.
2. The Short Tunnel would severely impact, if not eliminate, a proposed ocean desalination facility located in the City of Dana Point. This facility would be constructed by the South Coast Water District (SCWD) at the southern end of the 30-acre parcel owned by the SCWD in Dana Point. The time frame for this facility would occur over several years.

33282 Golden Lantern, Dana Point, CA 92629 • (949) 248-3500 • FAX (949) 248-9920
Internet: www.danapoint.org

DISTRIBUTION: 5/3/04

R. CHILTON
J. LACY
W. OSSENMACHER
W. RAYFIELD
J. SNYDER
D. CHOTKEVYS
K. Butterwick
Brenda W.



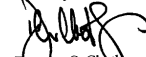
The first step has been achieved: funding subsidy from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). The next steps over the next year would include the preparation of the environmental documents, which should be completed in late 2004. After the approval of the environmental documents, the design and permitting steps would begin, which should be completed by 2006/07. Construction would then begin in 2007 and the facility would be operational in 2009/10.

3. The Short Tunnel Alternative would place double tracks adjacent to the Beach Road Community. This would create a number of serious impacts to the quality of life as well as to the public safety access to this community.
4. While the City of Dana Point has vigorously worked to maintain and maximize coastal access for our visitors and residents, the CHSRA proposed Short Tunnel improvements would increase the likelihood of life-threatening conflicts at existing formal and informal at-grade rail crossings, leading ultimately to decreased public access to the beach. As the City of Dana Point deals with coastal access, Doheny State Beach is located where proposed rail corridor improvements will cause adverse impacts upon the resources found in these parks, and the public's ability to visit these areas. The at-grade Short Tunnel Alternative would create problems for safe public access to the County Beaches as well as Doheny State Beach. California State Parks has already voiced their strong support against at-grade double tracking through Dana Point for the aforementioned reasons.
5. In Dana Point, geologic stability and coastal processes near and under the rail corridor may be impacted due to improvements proposed in this project. The residential communities of Capistrano Beach will certainly be threatened.

Given the aforementioned, I am sure you will understand the Community's concern over the Short Tunnel alternative. Because the Long Split Tunnel is such a superior alternative, it appears to be the only choice. The Short Tunnel Alternative is double tracking along the Coast and has some serious public safety as well as geological concerns due to its proximity to the fragile Coastal Bluffs in Capistrano Beach.

Thank you for your time and attention to ensure that the transportation needs of California are balanced with the environmental concerns of its residents as well as the safeguard of its precious resources.

Sincerely,


Douglas C. Chotkevys
City Manager

C: The Honorable Mayor and Dana Point City Council

**Response to Comments of Douglas C. Chotkevys, City Manager, City of Dana Point, Office of the City Manager,
September 7, 2004 (Letter AL078)**

AL078-1

Acknowledged. These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration in their program environmental review of LOSSAN rail improvements. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

Comment Letter AL079



City of Del Mar

1050 Camino Del Mar · Del Mar, California 92014-2698

Where the Turf meets the Surf

AL079

August 30, 2004

Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: City of Del Mar Comments on LOSSAN Corridor Draft Program EIR/EIS

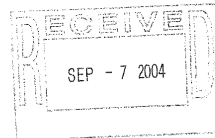
Dear Mr. Leavitt,

I am writing on behalf of the City Council of the City of Del Mar to thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor. Del Mar is very disappointed, however, with the lack of essential details in the Draft EIR/EIS that would clearly describe the impacts of each of the alternatives. The lack of information available in the document does not allow the public to adequately assess the specific short and long term impacts of the proposed alignments to the surrounding properties. The City of Del Mar is most interested in understanding the impacts to the two significant environmental resources that bound the City, the San Dieguito Lagoon and the Penasquitos Lagoon, as well as Crest Canyon, the private and public property along the proposed corridors, and the effects that a long term construction project would have on the downtown village corridor in the City of Del Mar.

As you are keenly aware, the City supports removing the tracks from the coastal bluffs within the next 15 to 20 years. Therefore, even though we are aware that CEQA requires that you analyze the "no-build option" in the Draft Program EIR/EIS, Del Mar is strongly opposed to consideration of that option as a viable alternative. Additional analysis is needed in the Draft EIR/EIS that would more extensively and more clearly identify the problems that leaving the tracks on the bluff will have in the long term.

Although the EIR/EIS has identified alternatives for removing passenger trains from the bluffs, we see no mention of what will happen to the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) line that currently uses the tracks on the bluff as well. This is a significant detail that needs to be worked out in order to eliminate all rail traffic from the bluff. As you have heard us and others in San Diego say in the past, Del Mar would prefer to see an alignment studied that would remove the passenger trains from the bluff and relocate them to the I-5 Corridor, and that would remove the freight trains from the bluff and relocate them to the I-15 Corridor.

Although it would be much more preferable to see the trains put adjacent to the major arterials in San Diego, in an effort to comment on the other two options being proposed in the EIR/EIS for the Del Mar corridor, the following is offered again:



LOSSAN Draft Program EIR/EIS
City of Del Mar Comments
August 30, 2004
Page 2

Camino del Mar Tunnel #1 - At first glance this option seems to be very appealing because it takes the tracks off the bluffs, and it hides the train in a tunnel underground for almost the entire length of town. This would allow the tracks to remain underneath the Camino del Mar public right-of-way, rather than under private property, and it would reduce the environmental impacts to a very small additional area of the Los Penasquitos Lagoon and State Park to the east of the N. Torrey Pines Road Bridge. The actual locations of venting devices and the actual boundaries of the disturbance for the entry and exit portals at the north and south ends of Camino del Mar have not been adequately identified. There is no way of clearly assessing the types and lengths of impacts from the design as shown to date. Additionally, the impacts to the City of Del Mar during a multi-year construction project could be devastating to the economic viability of the downtown, and could have significant impacts on the quality of life of the residents of Del Mar. These impacts are not clearly identified or discussed.

In order to be able to adequately comment on this option and to adequately identify all project impacts, Del Mar is requesting that a Project Specific EIR/EIS be completed for the Del Mar corridor.

Penasquitos Lagoon Bypass Tunnel - There are positives and negatives to the alignment proposed for this option. The tracks are removed from the Del Mar bluffs and placed in a tunnel that would skirt the east side of Los Penasquitos Lagoon and would head north along the I-5 corridor before heading west and then north again. The alignment actually begins to head west just before reaching homes on Race Track View Drive and the San Dieguito Lagoon, where the tracks (still in the tunnel) make an easy curve north west under Crest Canyon Open Space Park and emerge from the tunnel at approximately the west end of Race Track View Dr., skirting the south side of San Dieguito Road at approximately the base of the hillside before going across Jimmy Durante Blvd., and then heading across the Del Mar Public Works Yard, and north across the lagoon.

The close proximity of this alignment to Crest Canyon, the San Dieguito Lagoon and to private and public properties along this corridor raise serious concerns about the welfare of Del Mar environmental resources and the investments of many private property owners.

As noted in our letter of April 18, 2002, regarding the NOP for the LOSSAN Corridor EIR/EIS, the City of Del Mar is very concerned that the two environmental resources on the north and south ends of Del Mar, the San Dieguito Lagoon and the Penasquitos Preserve and Lagoon, be freed from future impacts of the rail corridor improvements if at all possible. It appears that there may be fewer impacts to the Penasquitos Lagoon; however, the Bypass option may more significantly impact the newly restored San Dieguito Lagoon.

There is no mention in the EIR/EIS of the upcoming SCE Lagoon Enhancement project that will begin construction in mid-2005 to restore the habitat of the San Dieguito Lagoon. This is a \$40 to \$100 million dollar restoration project being accomplished by the San Dieguito Lagoon JPA and Southern California Edison and it has been in the planning

AL079-1
cont.

AL079-1

Comment Letter AL079 Continued

LOSSAN Draft Program EIR/EIS
City of Del Mar Comments
August 30, 2004
Page 3

process for many more years than the alignments of the rail system being proposed in the EIR/EIS. The analysis of the alignment for the Penasquitos Bypass option needs to include specific impacts that may be expected to the newly revitalized lagoon, and it should offer mitigation measures as well. It also needs to address the significant impacts that appear to be destined to demolish many of the adjacent private properties along San Dieguito Road. The only way these impacts can be adequately identified, analyzed and mitigation measures proposed is to prepare a Project Specific EIR/EIS for this alignment as well. In fact, Del Mar feels a Project Specific EIR/EIS is necessary for all alignments in the Del Mar corridor. Del Mar would be glad to review funding options for this effort along with the High Speed Rail Authority, but we strongly request that the High Speed Rail Authority ensure that Del Mar is brought to the table when it is time to determine the scope of issues and the method of study for such an EIR/EIS, and then to review the Draft Project Specific EIR/EIS prior to distribution for comment to the public.

It is the feeling of the City of Del Mar that an additional alternative(s) needs to be seriously studied that removes all rail alignments from both the San Dieguito and the Penasquitos Lagoons. The obvious alignments, suggested earlier, are the I-5 corridor for passenger trains and the I-15 corridor for freight trains.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Program EIR/EIS. It is our hope that you will consider our comments and will invite Del Mar to work with you in identifying funding for a Project Specific EIR/EIS specifically in the Del Mar Corridor, and to define the issues of concern and the method for analyzing the impacts for all alignments discussed above.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Earnest
Mayor

cc: Del Mar City Councilmembers
Lauraine Brekke-Esparza, City Manager
Linda S. Niles, Planning and Community Development Director

AL079-1
cont.

Response to Comments of Richard L. Earnest, Mayor, City of Del Mar, September 7, 2004 (Letter AL079)

AL079-1

Acknowledged. These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration in their program environmental review of LOSSAN rail improvements. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

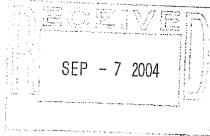
Comment Letter AL080**AL080**

www.ci.irvine.ca.us

City of Irvine, One Civic Center Plaza, P.O. Box 19575, Irvine, California 92623-9575 (949) 724-6000

August 26, 2004

Mr. Dan Leavitt
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: California High-Speed Train Program EIR/EIS**

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The City of Irvine is pleased to submit the attached comments to the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the proposed California High-Speed Train (HST) System.

The City understands that the environmental process for the HST Program to be as follows:

- Circulation and public review of the Draft Program EIR/EIS
- Final Program EIR/EIS
- Preliminary Engineering and Project Level Environmental Review

If the selected HST corridor, station location, and recommended mitigations fall within the City of Irvine boundaries, the City seeks assurances that the CHSRA will work closely with the City to resolve specific issues including, but not limited to, station modifications, sound wall placement, parking needs and system aesthetics.

The City appreciates the opportunity to participate in this exciting project and looks forward to working with you as the project progresses. Please feel free to contact Rick Sandzimier, Project Development Administrator, at (949) 724-7350 if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,


MARTY BRYANT
Director of Public Works

MB/RJS/AC:icw

Mr. Dan Leavitt
August 26, 2004
Page 2

c: Allison Hart, City Manager
Sean Joyce, Assistant City Manager
Judy Vonada, Deputy City Manager
Rick Sandzimier, Project Development Administrator
Richard Marcus, OCTA, P.O. Box 14184, Orange, CA 92863-1584
John Lower, City of Anaheim, P.O. Box 3222, Anaheim, CA 92805

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Comment Letter AL080 Continued**CITY OF IRVINE****Comments on Draft Program Environmental Impact Report Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System****GENERAL PROJECT-RELATED COMMENTS**

The City of Irvine remains supportive of the High-Speed Train project as an alternative and innovative intercity commuting option for the State. The City is committed to working with other jurisdictions in Orange County to ensure that the project includes at least one main stop in the County and that the alignment and improvements are sensitive to the various needs and issues in each. We believe many of the issues will be common but there will be some that are unique. A station pair (such as Anaheim and Irvine stops) may be an effective strategy to soften or flatten some of the traffic concerns.

The City of Irvine requests strong consideration to include a high-speed train stop at the Irvine Transportation Center (ITC) in the Initial Operating Segment (IOS) of the project. As an integral component of the IOS, it is our understanding that the stop at the ITC would receive further consideration in the project level environmental review. This early and on-going planning is critical to ensure that the Irvine stop, if developed, will be of the highest quality design and function.

Security at the ITC is a paramount concern for the City. With the addition of the California High-Speed Train (HST), the subsequent project level environmental analysis must address the increased security needs and interests at the ITC and its surrounding area. Some key security interests will be surveillance of the tracks, platforms, HST cars, and power infrastructure. In addition, security needs for the probable larger lobby, ticketing, parking areas, and baggage-handling needs must be addressed. How does the CHSRA intend to address these concerns?

The report states that a separate EIR/EIS is being prepared by Caltrans and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the LOSSAN alternative using conventional (non-electric) improvements. When is that document expected to be released? Will subsequent project-level environmental review and design for the HST corridor consider the Caltrans project? Integration of the project is necessary.

COMMENTS CONCERNING TRANSPORTATION/LAND USE

The City is encouraged with the potential win-win opportunities the ITC stop brings to both agencies. The ITC is conveniently located in our growing Irvine Spectrum employment center. The Irvine Spectrum houses millions of square feet of existing office, research and development, industrial and commercial land uses, and millions more still to be developed entitlements. The growing Entertainment Center, an open-air shopping mall in the Spectrum, is already a significant regional draw/destination with more renowned anchor tenants included in the on-going expansion. Residential development opportunities (1,500+ units) in this business center have recently been approved and further considerations are likely.

- 1 -

The ITC is directly adjacent to and would serve the planned developments within the Orange County Great Park properties. The Great Park properties represent approximately 4,700 acres. Plans are underway that are expected to make the Great Park a nationally and potentially an internationally acclaimed development; with vast open spaces, recreational and educational facilities, and regionally significant land uses. As part of the Great Park project, transit oriented development strategies that would bring greater mixed land uses and more residential units immediately adjacent to the ITC are being studied.

AL080-5
cont.

A comprehensive look at HST impacts and mitigation efforts on the community is needed. For example, in the City of Irvine the HST corridor through Irvine dissects approximately two miles of medium and medium-high residential density on both sides of the tracks. The project must not degrade the quality of life for residents due to noise and visual (assuming catenary lines) impacts. The project owner will need to work with City staff and residents to implement consensus-based mitigation alternatives, such as sound walls, berms, landscaping, and other measures. In cases where disruptions to localized traffic patterns will result from the HST project, improvements to the street system and freeway interchanges on behalf of the project sponsor will be provided. A technical evaluation of the local circulation must include Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) data. Impacts and mitigation must include on-site station analysis – needs for additional parking, the platform area, lobby seating, ticketing and baggage handling.

AL080-6

COMMENTS ON DRAFT PROGRAM EIR/EIS DOCUMENT**SUMMARY**

Page S-15 (second full paragraph). The document mentioned that the passenger cost for travel via the HST service would be lower than travel by automobile or air for the same intercity markets. What is the proposed fare?

AL080-7

Page S-15 (third full paragraph). In areas where HST will be sharing the right-of-way of existing rail lines, will the existing tracks be upgraded or will a new set of tracks be laid to accommodate the new system? How will the existing passenger rails and future capacity be affected?

AL080-8

Table S.6-1. Year 2035 population projection is used. Why is 2035 used rather than staying consistent with the 2020 time frame of the rest of the study?

AL080-9

ALTERNATIVES

Page 2-29 (Item A). More discussion on the Steel-Wheel-On-Steel-Rail Electrified System is needed. Does this system need to utilize overhead catenary for electrical power supply? If not, what other options are being considered?

AL080-10

- 2 -

Comment Letter AL080 Continued

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Table 3.2-16. For the “2020 High-Speed Train Frequency by Station Pair,” the LOSSAN via Orange County corridor is not represented. Please include.

AL080-11

Page 3.2-32. Regarding assertions on “sustainable capacity,” please include an analysis concerning the LOSSAN via Orange County corridor. How is sustainable capacity affected at the Irvine station given the proposed electric propulsion on a shared-use track which must interface with conventional propulsion? What accommodations must be present to integrate the systems? What would be required of passengers given these circumstances? System integration must be addressed.

AL080-12

Please include more detail on “off-line stopping tracks,” such as right-of-way, length, and operational requirements.

Page 3.4-22 (last paragraph). Document assumes that both HST alignment and high-end conventional rail improvement options would result in a fully grade-separated LOSSAN rail alignment. Are funding plans included with the HST project for fully grade-separated alignments?

AL080-13

Page 3.4-25 (Table 3.4-2). How are the mitigation locations identified? Are any mitigation sites located in Irvine or Tustin? If so, where?

AL080-14

Page 3.7-12 (third paragraph). Cite the sources of the information. Where are the 53 – 88 miles of rail alignments and transit stations located?

AL080-15

Page 3.7-23 (last paragraph). For clarification purposes, mention that although the first option would connect Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) to Anaheim utilizing the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor, it would use the existing LOSSAN corridor after Anaheim.

AL080-16

Page 3.13-12 (Item E). Name the active faults in the discussion.

AL080-17

COST AND OPERATIONS

Page 4-6. The document broaches the subject of providing “light” maintenance facilities at or in the vicinity of terminus stations. What is the definition of “light” maintenance? Is the ITC considered a terminus station? If so, please provide more specific details on what the space, facility, and equipment and staffing requirements will be for “light” maintenance. With regard to the four main maintenance facilities for the HST system, are any planned in the Orange County area? If so, where? Please provide the general site development requirements for a main maintenance facility in term of acreage, building size/architecture, spur track requirements, parking, and staffing.

AL080-18

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND RELATED IMPACTS

Page 5-12 (Item B). If statewide population and employment forecasts for the HST Alternative are similar to those of No Project Alternative, why are the figures for population different between the two alternatives? Provide reasons why the HST alternative results in lesser population increase?

AL080-19

HIGH-SPEED TRAIN ALIGNMENT OPTIONS COMPARISON

Table 6.6-2. Will the existing tracks at the ITC require upgrades? How would this improvement affect the trains currently utilizing the tracks?

AL080-20

Page 6-84. Trains currently pass through Harvard crossing daily in the City of Irvine, yet this report does not suggest that this crossing is to be grade-separated. Why not?

AL080-21

Response to Comments of Marty Bryant, Director of Public Works, City of Irvine, September 7, 2004 (Letter AL080)**AL080-1**

Acknowledged.

AL080-2

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 10.1.7.

AL080-3

The safe operation of the HST system would be of the utmost importance. To this end, the HST Alternative is described as a "fully grade separated and fully access-controlled guideway with intrusion monitoring systems." This means that the HST infrastructure (e.g., mainline tracks and maintenance and storage facilities) would be designed to prevent access by unauthorized vehicles, persons, and animals. The capital cost estimates include allowances for appropriate barriers (fences and walls), state-of-the-art communication, access-control, and monitoring and detection systems. All aspects of the HST system would conform to the latest Federal requirements regarding transportation security as the system is developed and implemented. Information has been added to the Final Program EIR/EIS to more fully address this issue of safety and security (see Section 2.6.2a of the Final Program EIR/EIS).

AL080-4

The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements are not being considered in this Final Program EIR/EIS and are the subject of the Caltrans LOSSAN Rail Improvements Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

AL080-5, & 6

Acknowledged. Subsequent project level environmental review would address specific community impacts and potential mitigation.

AL080-7

Please refer to Section 3.2.3.B: NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE VS. MODAL AND HIGH-SPEED TRAIN ALTERNATIVES; Passenger Cost, for a discussion of fares and other passenger costs for each of the modes considered. These figures are based on the Business Plan prepared by the Authority. HST fares would be set in the future.

AL080-8

More detailed engineering will be necessary for subsequent project level studies to determine the specific improvements to the track on this existing corridor. The capital cost estimates presented in Chapter 4 of the Final Program EIR/EIS assume that existing tracks are replaced.

AL080-9

The economic growth analysis (See Chapter 5) was conducted for forecast years of 2020 and 2035. The 2020 forecast year is consistent with analyses that were conducted for other resource areas, while the 2035 forecast year provides a longer time horizon to consider full market response after completion of the proposed HST or Modal Alternative. Year 2035 results are described in this Program EIR/EIS because they provide a better reflection of the full growth inducement potential of each alternative, as well as a better understanding of possible secondary effects.

AL080-10

As part of the LOSSAN shared use corridor, the HST system would use an overhead catenary power supply system. Other types of power supply such as third rail systems are not feasible in a shared use corridor or for very high-speed trains.

AL080-11

Table 3.2-16 is based on the Authority's Business Plan analysis, which did not include service to Orange County. The table is presented for representative purposes, only. Orange County service is included in the Authority's preferred system of alignments and stations and will be reflected in subsequent studies.

AL080-12

Issues pertaining to sustainable capacity are different for shared use corridors as compared to dedicated HST corridors, due to the constraints of sharing the same infrastructure. The capacity of the shared use corridor is summarized in Section 6.6.2 as follows: "Operational analysis suggests range of between 18 and 45 HST trains a day in each direction, depending on schedule and the effectiveness of a joint operating plan that would have to be developed in partnership with Amtrak and Metrolink. These estimated HST service levels assumed 16 Amtrak and 29 Metrolink trains daily in each direction." Passenger flow and systems integration are very detailed issues that will be addressed in subsequent project level analysis, when the proposed infrastructure and system operation will be defined with more specificity if a decision is made to go forward with the proposed HST system.

The conceptual design of passenger stations, including off-line stopping tracks, is presented in Engineering Criteria, January 2004.

AL080-13

The capital cost estimates presented in Chapter 4 of the Program EIR/EIS include full grade separation for the HST and high-end conventional improvement options (these costs were also in the Draft PEIR/S). It is beyond the scope of the Program EIR/EIS process to include a financing plan.

AL080-14

Site-specific impacts and potential mitigation will be identified and addressed during subsequent project level environmental review, based on more precise information regarding location and design of

the facilities proposed. The more detailed engineering associated with the project level environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential impacts. Once the alignment is refined and the facilities are fully defined through project level analysis, and after avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted, site specific impacts and potential mitigation measures will be addressed.

AL080-15

The paragraph refers to the length of the HST alignment and station options that would potentially affect highly sensitive land uses as determined in the land use analysis documented in the Los Angeles – Orange County- San Diego Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property and Environmental Justice Technical Evaluation, January 2004.

AL080-16

Revised as noted.

AL080-17

The Newport-Inglewood and Rose Canyon Faults are crossed multiple times by Modal and HST improvements. Please refer to the Los Angeles – Orange County-San Diego Geology and Soils Technical Evaluation, January 2004 for a full description of the names and locations of active faults identified.

AL080-18

The possible station location at the Irvine Transportation Center is considered a terminal station. Ideally, each terminal station would have a light maintenance and storage facility as close as possible to the terminal station location. The desirable configuration for such as facility includes tracks for "lay-up" (storage) of trainsets, a Service and Inspection (S&I) facility for safety inspection and light maintenance, and a train washer located on the yard approach track for exterior cleaning prior to daily operation. In addition, adjacent to the S&I facility, on a separate track, is a wheel truing facility capable

of accommodating two cars at a time. An employee administrative and comfort area would also be included.

The system would only require one main heavy maintenance facility, yet four possible locations were considered for the PEIR/S to assess the likely or representative impacts associated with such a facility. Specific siting and design of this facility would be completed during subsequent project level analysis.

Conceptual designs for the prototypical maintenance and storage facilities are described and illustrated in the Engineering Criteria report, January 2004.

AL080-19

The HST Alternative does not result in lesser population growth as contended by the commenter. Text on page 5-12 and Table 5.3-5 indicates that HST Alternative would result in about 700,000 more people in affected areas than the No-Project Alternative in 2035. The Program EIR/EIS notes that the population and employment forecasts are similar, but it does not state that they are identical. Characterizing the statewide results as “similar” is appropriate given that the difference between the system alternatives (700,000 people and 450,000 jobs) is relatively small as compared to the 20 million additional people and 10.5 million additional jobs between 2002 and 2035.

AL080-20

Specific track improvements, construction staging, and construction period operation plans would all be addressed during the subsequent project level studies, when the proposed infrastructure and system operation would be defined more specifically, if a decision is made to proceed with the proposed HST system.

AL080-21

The Harvard Avenue grade crossing is converted to a new undercrossing (i.e., road under rail) for the HST and High-Build Conventional options. This improvement is included in the cost estimate and environmental analysis.

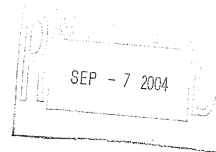
Comment Letter AL081**AL081****CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL**

Community Development Department
27781 La Paz Road • Laguna Niguel, California 92677
Phone/949•362•4360 Fax/949•362•4369

CITY COUNCIL

Joe Brown
Cathryn DeYoung
Linda Lindholm
Mimi Walters
Mike Whipple

August 30, 2004

*Via US Mail and Online Submittal*

Attn: California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: City of Laguna Niguel Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments for the proposed California High-Speed Train System

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High-Speed Train System. The City of Laguna Niguel has the following general comments on the Los Angeles to San Diego via Orange County alignment:

- Subsequent project-specific environmental analysis should identify how the proposed project would affect the new Metrolink commuter rail station along Forbes Road in the City of Laguna Niguel. The analysis should include review of the number of future projected daily ridership and rail-line trips at the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink Station based on existing conditions, compared with projected changes resulting from the various LOSSAN alignments/improvements through the City of San Juan Capistrano and the City of San Clemente. Analysis and mitigation (if applicable) of additional traffic, air-quality and noise impacts should be included.
- Subsequent project-specific environmental analysis should identify if the project will include improvements within the City of Laguna Niguel which extend beyond the existing rail-line right-of-way and if any improvements will require property acquisition. Development and operational impacts to surrounding uses should be analyzed.

The City of Laguna Niguel appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High-Speed Train System and requests copies of all public

Draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High-Speed Train System Comments
August 30, 2004
Page 2

meeting and hearing notices and draft environmental documentation. When available, please mail to:

City of Laguna Niguel
Community Development Department
27781 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
Attention: John Morgan, Associate Planner

Should you have any questions regarding the above comments, please contact me at (949) 362-4360 or jmorgan@ci.laguna-niguel.ca.us.

Sincerely,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Robert P. Lenard, Director

John Morgan
Associate Planner

cc. Robert Lenard, Community Development Director
Stephen Higa, AICP, Senior Planner

AL081-1

**Response to Comments of John Morgan, Associate Planner, City of Laguna Niguel, September 7, 2004
(Letter AL081)**

AL081-1

Acknowledged. Subsequent project level environmental review would address specific impacts and mitigation. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

Comment Letter AL082

AL082

**Metro**

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

August 27, 2004

Mr. Mehdi Morshed, Executive Director
California High-Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Comments on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed Fly California
Statewide High Speed Train System

Dear Mr. Morshed:

MTA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Fly California intercity high-speed passenger rail service. We understand that the decisions related to advancing the project would require major federal actions and further environmental review. As such, we look forward to reviewing the project-specific EIR if this project moves forward.

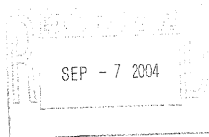
1. MTA supports the High Speed Rail Antelope Valley alignment and the Palmdale station. Attached is the March 25, 2004 action by the MTA Board of Directors (Attachment A).
2. MTA encourages the High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) to work with MTA and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) to address right-of-way issues.
3. The proposed project should not divert critical State and federal funding for MTA's surface transportation programs. We urge the Authority to work with MTA and SCRRA to address capital funding issues and ongoing operational costs.

If you have any further questions, please contact Douglas Kim at (213) 922-2817 or Susan Chapman at (213) 922-6908.

Sincerely,

James L. de la Loza
Chief Planning Officer
Countywide Planning & Development

Attachment: March 25, 2004 MTA Board action



AL082-1

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH, MAYOR FRANK ROBERTS
AND COUNCILMAN ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA
MARCH 18, 2004

33

The High Speed Rail Antelope Valley Alignment, together with the Palmdale Station, will provide high-speed passenger service to 700,000 more people and 270,000 more jobs than the proposed route directly from Bakersfield to Los Angeles through the Grapevine Pass. According to the Southern California Association of Governments, Northern Los Angeles County will experience one of the largest increases in population during the next 25 years. Palmdale and the surrounding communities have one of the fastest growth rates in the State of California. It is essential that this region be included in the High Speed Rail route in order to accommodate this growing population. Providing High Speed Rail service to the Antelope Valley rather than through the Grapevine Pass will increase economic benefit for the region and also for the State of California as a whole. The net economic benefit for the State of California with the Antelope Valley alignment is estimated at \$855 million.

According to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, there is a continuing need for industrial space in the County of Los Angeles, the lack of which will lead to significant economic losses for the region. In order to avoid the loss of the County's tax base, it is essential that the high speed rail alignment be placed through this growing portion of the County of Los Angeles. The High Speed Rail Antelope Valley Alignment will provide transportation incentives necessary to attract industries to one of the few places in the County of Los Angeles that can sustain residential and

- M O R E -

Comment Letter AL082 Continued

- PAGE 2 -

industrial development. The High Speed Rail Antelope Valley Alignment will also provide the backbone for the transportation improvements necessary to attract airlines to the Palmdale Airport.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Support the High Speed Rail Antelope Valley Alignment and the Palmdale Station; and
2. Forward a copy of this motion to the High Speed Rail Authority.

#

MDA:rfc

Response to Comments of James L. de la Loza, Chief Planning Officer, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, September 7, 2004 (Letter AL082)

AL082-1

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.23.1. The Authority and the FRA will continue to work with the MTA and SCRRA if the HST proposal moves forward. The preparation of a financing plan for the HST system is beyond the scope of this program EIR/EIS process.

Comment Letter AL083

AL083



SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

555 E. Weber Avenue • Stockton, California 95202

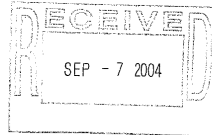
209.468.3913 • 209.468.1084 (fax)

www.sjco.org

August 25, 2004

Gary S. Giovanetti
CHAIRGary Harkin
VICE CHAIRJulia E. Greene
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Member Agencies

CITIES OF
ESCALON,
LATHROP,
LODI,
MANTEGA,
RIPON,
STOCKTON,
TRACY,
AND
THE COUNTY OF
SAN JOAQUINMehdi Morshed
California High Speed Rail Authority
925L Street
Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Morshed:

It is the position of the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOC) that the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed California High Speed Rail (HSR) system is not adequate because it does not address the use of the Altamont Pass for High Speed Rail service from the San Joaquin Valley into the San Francisco Bay Area. The Altamont Pass alignment was the preferred alternative in the original HSR Study, the current EIR has dismissed the alternative without adequate research.

The draft EIR does not adequately address the impacts of the proposed HSR system in several other areas:

- The impacts of noise from the HSR system on surrounding areas. Especially residential areas, and schools.
- The impacts of the construction of grade separations on the local traffic circulations systems.
- The impact of local road closures on local traffic circulations systems. The HSR will require road closures at many location.
- The impacts on agricultural lands surrounding system stations. The loss of agricultural land is a major issue in the San Joaquin Valley.
- The financial impacts of the HSR on other needed transportation investments in the state. The cost of the HSR may delay other critically needed transportation improvements.

Page2, High Speed Rail

For the reasons cited above, SJCOC can not support approval of the draft EIR for the HSR system at this time. Please contact Kim Kloebe of the SJCOC staff for any further information

Sincerely,

JULIA E. GREENE
Executive Director

AL083-1



CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

**Response to Comments of Julia E. Greene, Executive Director, San Joaquin Council of Governments,
September 7, 2004 (Letter AL083)**

AL083-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1. The Draft Program EIR/EIS is a program level environmental document. The Authority and FRA believe that the impacts from noise, impacts on local traffic, and impacts on agricultural lands have been investigated adequately at a program level. Should the HST proposal move forward, more detailed project level studies will be required. Determining the potential financial impacts of the proposed HST on other transportation investments is beyond the scope of this program EIR/EIS process.